PROJECT DESCRIPTION
2020 FALL/WINTER

NPS UNIT: CHACO CULTURE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

Position Title: Science Communication Assistant (1)
Position Type: Guest Scientist
Primary natural resource discipline: Multidisciplinary
Project keywords: Natural Resource Management, Interpretation, Science Communication
Location: Nageezi, New Mexico

COVID-19 NOTICE
This project description was developed prior to the onset of the COVID-19 outbreak. Therefore, project timelines and structure remain flexible and it may be necessary to postpone start dates, begin work remotely, or reformulate the project’s description. Should any development in the COVID-19 outbreak impair a project’s timeline or results, the GIP Team will work with the park and project mentors to assess the situation and determine the best course of action at that time.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND WORK PRODUCTS
Position Description: The GIP candidate will work at least one year, splitting their responsibilities between the natural resources and interpretive divisions. During their six months working with natural resources, the GIP will play an important stewardship role as they learn about, and assist in, the monitoring, assessment, management, and restoration of the park’s natural resources. While working with the park’s interpretive division, the candidate will assist with front-line interpretive operations with a focus on enhancing the park’s natural resource themed park programming, both onsite and by presenting off-site formal curriculum education outreach programs. These outreach programs will emphasize the importance of resource stewardship both within parks and communities as a whole.

Representing the NPS within local communities will allow these candidates to become role-models for local youth, while enhancing the park’s role as community partners and as a possible career path.

Resource stewardship ethics will be a cornerstone of the job, and the intern will be tasked with inspiring resource stewardship ethics during their public outreach. The nature of this proposal provides a broad spectrum of opportunity for the intern to cull and expand leadership and participatory citizenship values because the intern will be expected to develop and lead programs and bulletins that are aligned with garnering interest and participation in the public. A resource stewardship ethic will be built in the youth participants that will last a lifetime.

The Guest Scientist will walk away with a sense of stewardship for maintaining and sustaining earth’s natural and cultural resources because the work for this project will be tied directly to over 900 years of history and varying land management practices. The work accomplished by the GIP will be tied directly to the improvement and restoration of an important cultural site and natural wildlife corridor. The project leads for the NPS will be engaging and enthusiastic, and support the NPS mission wholeheartedly which requires the next generation to care about these issues. Leadership and participatory citizenship values will be developed during this project.
The NPS project leads will engage the GIP in the science of ecological restoration and natural resource management, and interpretation, hold discussions about actions, inaction and consequences to the ecological environment. By encouraging the candidate to make observations and think about solutions to restoration and resource preservation challenges, they will gain skills that will be relevant to natural and cultural resource protection of their immediate communities and beyond. The GIP will have leadership opportunities such as working with natural resource and interpretive staff mentors, leading volunteer groups, and after they are well immersed in understanding their role and resources, will have ample opportunity for completing appropriate projects with minimal supervision.

This position is offered through the National Park Service’s Geoscientists-in-the-Parks (GIP) Internship Program in partnership with Stewards Individual Placement Program (Stewards) and The Geological Society of America (GSA).

**Work Products:** There will be tangible and quantifiable outcomes related to the work performed by the two candidates. While working with the interpretive division, the Guest Scientist will be required to develop one formal interpretive program that can be delivered both on-site and translated into a community outreach program. Once the program is developed, the candidate will be required to present the program 2-3 times a week to park visitors. The onsite presentations will reach an estimation of 400-500 visitors. The candidates will seek opportunities to take their program to community venues 2-3 times a month. The audience size for these outreach opportunities will vary dramatically. Conservative estimates based on prior year’s stats indicate that the candidates will reach upwards of 1,000 people through these outreach programs. The Navajo Nation Annual Fair, the San Juan County Kids College, and the area Boys & Girls Clubs are all examples of outreach opportunities that the park has been active with for years. The candidate will continue to participate with these established partners, but they will also utilize their intimate knowledge of their communities to help the park find new opportunities and events that have yet to be identified by previous park staff.

While working with the natural resources division the candidate will assist in ongoing restoration efforts in dryland and riparian systems such as planting, monitoring populations of plants and animals, GIS data collection and interpretation, hydrology data collection. They will learn about the management of natural resources and will play an important stewardship role as they learn about, and assist in, the monitoring, assessment, management, and restoration of the park’s natural resources. They will have the opportunity to guide volunteer groups or crews in stewardship activities, develop at least one natural resource focused bulletin and one public outreach talk, and potentially hold weekly natural resource focused programs in one of several project areas.

**QUALIFICATIONS**

- Interpretation, Natural Resource Management, Science Communication

The applicant must be a U.S. citizen or U.S. permanent legal resident ("green-card-holder") between the ages of 18 and 30 years old, inclusive, or veteran up to age 35. Prior to starting this position, a government security background clearance will be required. An educational background in the Physical Sciences, Natural Resource Management, Science Communication is preferred. Skills involving public outreach and research will support this position.

**VEHICLE AND DRIVER LICENSE REQUIREMENTS**

- Applicant must have a valid driver license and a good driving record. Yes

A personal vehicle is REQUIRED for this position.

If the GIP is required to drive a park vehicle for their position, Stewards will perform a driving records search, and the GIP’s ability to drive a park vehicle during work hours will be contingent upon the results.
GIs will have to have had their license for 3 years or be over the age of 21 to be insured as drivers under Stewards insurance policy. Examples of things that will preclude a GiP from driving a park vehicle include: GiP under the age of 21 years old that has been licensed less than three years, DUls, multiple moving vehicle violations, suspended or revoked license, or three or more accidents (regardless of fault) in the last 3 years. If the driver's search is favorable, Stewards will provide driver's liability insurance while the intern is driving a NPS vehicle for their GiP position. If the GiP is denied coverage by Stewards, they will not be permitted to drive during work hours.

**HOUSING**

*Park housing is available and will be provided at no cost to the participant.* Park housing may consist of a furnished shared unit with private rooms and shared bathroom. GiP will want to bring personal items and food.

**INTERNSHIP DATES**

- **Start Date:** 10/31/2020
- **Number of weeks:** 52 weeks
- **Flexible start date:** Yes

**LIVING ALLOWANCE**

52 weeks ($400/week = $20,800)

**RELOCATION ALLOWANCE**

$500

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ALLOWANCE**

$1500

**AMERICORPS PROGRAM**

AmeriCorps is a program that engages individuals in intensive community service work with the goal of “helping others and meeting critical needs in the community”. The GiP Program is supported through AmeriCorps by providing a Segal Education Award in addition to the GiP’s living stipend and relocation allowance.

Upon successful completion of the GiP position, the GiPs (AmeriCorps members) are eligible for a $1,612 - $6,095 pre-tax education award that can be used for paying back student loans or for continuing their education. The amount of the education award is based on the length of the position.

AmeriCorps limits the number of terms an individual can serve to 4 terms. If an applicant has previously completed 4 GiP or other AmeriCorps positions, they will not be eligible to apply for an additional GiP position.

**NATURAL AND PHYSICAL WORK ENVIRONMENT**

**Natural Environment:** Chaco Culture National Historical Park, encompasses about 34,000 acres in the San Juan Basin region of northwestern New Mexico. Chaco Culture NHP ranges in elevation from 6,009-6,875 feet (1,832-2,096 m) and spans the the Semi-Desert Grassland/Shrub Steppe and the Pinyon-Juniper Woodland life zones. It experiences an average annual precipitation of 8.9 inches (225 mm). The park is about 75 miles (1.5 hrs of driving time on paved and dirt roads) from the towns of Aztec and Cuba NM. While limited supplies can be found in Cuba, Aztec and neighboring town of Farmington have ample opportunities for shopping.

**Physical Work Environment:** Work may be primarily in an office setting, field outings for public talks can be expected.
MENTORING AND LEARNING GOALS

**Mentoring:** Park staff will mentor the intern in encouraging a suite of learning opportunities from initial park and NPS training, to broader discipline specific or professional development training, conferences, and shadowing opportunities. The project leads for the NPS will be engaging and enthusiastic, and support the NPS mission wholeheartedly which requires the next generation to care about these issues. Leadership and participatory citizenship values will be developed during this project. The NPS project leads will engage the youth in the science of ecological restoration and natural resource management, and interpretation, hold discussions about actions, inaction and consequences to the ecological environment. By encouraging the youth to make observations and think about solutions to restoration and resource preservation challenges, they will gain skills that will be relevant to natural and cultural resource protection of their immediate communities and beyond. The youth will be have leadership opportunities such as working with natural resource and interpretive staff mentors, leading volunteer groups, and after they are well immersed in understanding their role and resources, will have ample opportunity for completing appropriate projects with minimal supervision.

**Learning Goals:** The intern will have an immersive experience in the NPS, Natural Resources, and Interpretation, and have ample opportunity to learn about other divisions and their roles. The intern will have opportunity for professional and personal development training.

**SUPERVISORS/MENTORS**

**Primary:**
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Natural Resource Program Lead  
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